

Assistance for making barren land cultivable

† 2828. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI KHAGEN DAS:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the State-wise and district-wise percentage of barren land in the country as-on-today;
- (b) whether Government provides financial assistance to States to make barren land cultivable;
- (c) if so, the details of assistance given to each State till 31st January, 2001; and
- (d) the target fixed for this purpose during 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (d) As per the definition of Nine Fold Land Use Classification classes using ground based techniques of the Ministry of Agriculture, the barren land covers land like mountains, deserts etc., land which cannot be brought under cultivation unless at a high cost. As per the Wasteland Atlas of India-2000 brought out by the Department of Land Resources in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad using Remote Sensing Technologies, total extent of wastelands/degraded lands in the country is 63.8 m ha. out of which the extent of barren/rocky/stony waste/sheet rock area is 6.45 m ha. The State-wise and district-wise details of wastelands including barren land in the country is given at Annexure [See Appendix 192, Annexure No. 14]

The Department of Land Resources of the Ministry of Rural Development addresses the task of developing wastelands and degraded lands through a major scheme namely Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP). It seeks to improve

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the productivity of wastelands to grown appropriate bio-mass specially fuel-wood and fodder as also to prevent further degradation. Hence agricultural production are generally not feasible on such land at the first stage of development. This Scheme is being implemented on watershed basis as per the Guidelines for Watershed Development with effect from 1.4.95. An amount of Rs. 210.00 crores has been earmarked for the Scheme during 2001-02. State-wise details of assistance given to States from 1.4.95 to 31st January, 2001 is given at Annexure. [See Appendix 192, Annexure No. 15]

Increasing poverty In backward tribal areas

† 2829. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether poverty is increasing day-by-day in the backward tribal areas of the country during the last one decade;
- (b) whether it has become too difficult for them even to subsist and most of those areas are starving;
- (c) whether Government have assessed the situation in those affected areas and districts; and
- (d) if so, whether any action has been taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the situation forever?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) Comparable estimates of poverty among the Scheduled Tribe population are not available. However, as per the latest estimates, which are available for the year 1993-94, 51.94% of the Scheduled Tribe population are living below the poverty line in rural areas while for urban areas it was 41.14% No separate estimate is available for backward areas in the country.

(b) to (d) In order to alleviate poverty, various schemes/ programmes are being implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in addition to the poverty alleviation schemes, of other Ministries/

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